

Message Text

PAGE 01 KABUL 07332 01 OF 02 160930Z

16

ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 EUR-10 IO-03 PM-03 DODE-00

DRC-01 EB-03 /063 W

----- 115289

P 160615Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5457

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 7332

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, AF, PK, IR, UR

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT DAOUD

REF: STATE 202064 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: IN LENGTHY MEETING WITH CHARGE, DAOUD EXHIBITED OBSESSIVE PREOCCUPATION WITH PERCEIVED MILITARY THREATS FROM PAKISTAN AND IRAN AND WITH OVERRIDING NECESSITY TO ACHIEVE AN "HONORABLE SOLUTION" OF PUSHTUNISTAN ISSUE. HE SHARPLY REJECTED IMPLICATION THAT PRO-SOVIET OR COMMUNIST INFLUENCE ON HIS REGIME MERITS CONCERN, WHILE MAKING CLEAR REGIME'S INTENTION TO ACQUIRE LARGE AMOUNTS OF ADDITIONAL WEAPONS FROM USSR DESPITE PREDICTABLE HEAVY DRAIN ON AFGHAN RESOURCES. OVERALL IMPRESSIONS CONVEYED WERE (1) CONSIDERABLE PARANOIA ABOUT THREATS TO HIS REGIME, (2) DESIRE FOR CONTINUED US FRIENDSHIP AND ASSISTANCE BUT LITTLE EXPECTATION
SECRET

PAGE 02 KABUL 07332 01 OF 02 160930Z

OF EFFECTIVE US INFLUENCE IN RELATION TO HIS PRIORITY CONCERNS, (3) DAOUD'S ISOLATION FROM SOME DISTURBING TRENDS WITHIN HIS REGIME, AND (4) CONFIDENCE THAT HE CAN USE SOVIETS AND THEIR SUPPORT TO ACHIEVE HIS LONG-THWARTED PUSHTUNISTAN GOAL. END SUMMARY.

1. I MET OCTOBER 13 FOR OVER 90 MINUTES WITH PRESIDENT DAOUD, DEPFONMIN WAHID ABDULLAH SITTING IN ON CONVERSATION. NO OTHER CIVILIANS WERE IN EVIDENCE ANYWHERE IN GULKHANA PALACE WHERE DAOUD NOW SPENDS HIS WORK DAYS AND WHERE HE RECEIVED ME IN SURROUNDINGS OF LONELY ELEGANCE. ATMOSPHERE WAS FRIENDLY AND INFORMAL. DAOUD WAS ALMOST "GRANDFATHERLY" DURING MOST OF DISCUSSION. AT ONE OR TWO POINTS, HOWEVER, COLD RUTHLESSNESS FLASHED UNMISTABLY TO THE SURFACE. HE MADE MUCH OF HIS FRIENDSHIP AND ADMIRATION FOR US AMBASSADORS, PARTICULARLY AMBASSADOR BYROADE WHOSE APPOINTMENT TO ISLAMABAD HE ESPECIALLY WELCOMED, AND AMBASSADOR NEUMANN WHOSE RECENT DEPARTURE HE GREATLY REGRETTE. HE ALSO STRESSED HE WAS LOOKING FORWARD VERY MUCH TO AMBASSADOR ELIOT'S ARRIVAL. RECALLING HIS REPUTATION FOR PREFERRING FRANK TALK TO DIPLOMATIC NICETIES, I SPOKE CANDIDLY ABOUT SOME ASPECTS OF AFGHANISTAN'S INTERNATIONAL SITUATION. ABDULLAH CONFIRMED LATER THAT THIS FRANKNESS HAD BEEN WELL RECEIVED.

2. ALTHOUGH BILLED AS A TOUR D'HORIZON, CONVERSATION TURNED OUT INSTEAD TO BE ALMOST ENTIRELY A "TOUR D'PUSHTUNISTAN." AFTER OPENING AMENITIES, IT QUICKLY BECAME OBVIOUS THIS WAS ONLY SUBJECT DAOUD REALLY WANTED TO DISCUSS. FIRST ASSURING ME THAT HE WANTED VERY MUCH TO STRENGTHEN AFGHANISTAN'S RELATIONS WITH THE US AND TO CONTINUE THE FRIENDSHIP WHICH HAD CHARACTERIZED OUR RELATIONS IN PAST, HE THEN LAUNCHED INTO A LENGTHY STATEMENT ABOUT PUSHTUNISTAN ISSUE. HE SAID THIS PROBLEM IS VITAL FOR AFGHANISTAN, EVEN THOUGH OVER THE YEARS THEY HAD BEEN UNABLE TO CONVINCE THEIR AMERICAN FRIENDS TO SEE IT IN THE SAME LIGHT. IT WAS, HE SAID, A PROBLEM FUNDAMENTAL TO AFGHAN HONOR, AND HE WISHED TO URGE US AS FRIENDS OF BOTH PARTIES TO LOOK AT IT OBJECTIVELY AND HELP FIND AN HONORABLE SOLUTION ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES.

3. DAOUD THEN CHARACTERIZED THE PRESENT BALANCE OF POWER IN THE REGION AS HIGHLY UNFAVORABLE FOR AFGHANISTAN. HE DEPICTED BOTH PAKISTAN AND IRAN AS HAVING "GRAND DESIGNS" WHICH THEY WERE PURSUING. THE IMPACT OF AGGRESSIVE PAKISTANI ATTITUDES, CRUDE PAKISTANI INTERFERENCE IN AFGHANISTAN'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS, AND PAKISTANI
SECRET

PAGE 03 KABUL 07332 01 OF 02 160930Z

INTERVENTION IN THE FRONTIER TRIBAL AREAS WAS NOW COMPOUNDED BY PAKISTAN'S USE OF ARMS AGAINST "OUR BALUCH AND PUSHTUN BROTHERS." HE SAID HE WANTED TO MAKE QUITE CLEAR THAT THE GOA CANNOT REMAIN INDIFFERENT TO THESE ACTIONS WHICH EVERY DAY MAKE THE SITUATION MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT. HE ASKED (SOMEWHAT PERFUNTORILY) THAT WE TRY TO PERSUADE BHUTTO TO "CEASE THESE PROVOCATIONS."

4. PRESIDENT DAOUD THEN REMINDED ME HE HAD TOLD "HIS AMERICAN FRIENDS" THIRTEEN OR FOURTEEN YEARS AGO THAT THIS ISSUE MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO GO UNRESOLVED. NOW, HE SAID, "IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE REVIEW BASICALLY OUR FOREIGN POLICY" BECAUSE AFGHANISTAN FEELS IN GREAT DANGER FROM BOTH ITS NEIGHBORS. ON ONE SIDE A NEIGHBOR IS SPENDING BILLIONS OF DOLLARS ON NEW ARMAMENTS AND ON THE OTHER

SIDE A NEIGHBOR, EVEN AFTER HAVING LOST BANGLADESH, IS INCREASING ITS ARMY FROM EIGHT TO THIRTEEN DIVISIONS. WE ALSO SEE THE CHINESE ACTIVELY ASSISTING THE PAKISTANIS TO FORM "COMMANDO GROUPS" FOR ACTIONS ALONG AFGHAN FRONTIERS. ALL OF THESE THREATS CONVINCE US THAT WE ARE IN SERIOUS DANGER. THERE ARE ONLY TWO ALTERNATIVES FOR US: (A) ACCEPT, REMAIN PASSIVE AND LIVE IN A MISERABLE, DISHONORABLE CONDITION OR (B) STRENGTHEN OURSELVES TO PREPARE FOR ANY EVENTUALITY.

5. DAOUD THEN RUEFULLY CONTINUED THAT IT WAS TRAGIC THAT A SMALL COUNTRY DESPERATELY NEEDING TO HUSBAND ITS LIMITED RESOURCES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TO FEED ITS PEOPLE HAD TO USE THOSE RESOURCES FOR ARMAMENTS. HE DID NOT MINIMIZE THE DIFFICULTIES HE SAW AHEAD. HOWEVER, HE SAID, "WE ARE TRAPPED BETWEEN THESE THREATS AND MUST ACCEPT OUR DESTINY." HE RECALLED THAT DURING THE 1950'S HE HAD TOLD ALL OF THE US AMBASSADORS "THESE FACTS" AND ALSO CALLED THEM TO SECRETARY DULLES' ATTENTION. HE HAD PRESSED THEM ON ALL OF PAKISTAN'S LEADERS OF THAT ERA, SAYING TO PAKISTAN "WE SHOULD SEEK REAL SOLUTIONS FOR OUR COMMON PROBLEM SO THAT WE CAN BOTH CONCENTRATE OUR RESOURCES ON THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BOTH OUR COUNTRIES SO DESPERATELY NEED." AGAIN TODAY, PRESIDENT DAOUD CONTINUED, I SAY THIS SAME THINGS. "ALL OF THE EXPENDITURE WE WILL MAKE ON ARMIES WILL BE USELESS IN THE LONG RUN FOR IT WILL NOT SOLVE OUR PROBLEM. THIS IS WHY ALL PARTIES SHOULD LOOK AT THE PROBLEM CALMLY, LOGICALLY, AND REALISTICALLY. IF THERE IS REAL GOOD WILL, AT LEAST MAJOR ELEMENTS OF IT CAN STILL BE SOLVED."

SECRET

PAGE 01 KABUL 07332 02 OF 02 160923Z

13

ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PRS-01 EUR-10 IO-03 PM-03 DODE-00

DRC-01 EB-03 /063 W

----- 115249

P 160615Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5458

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 KABUL 7332

LIMDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

6. AFTER THIS OMINOUS PRESENTATION, IT SEEMED WISE TO GO BEYOND THE SIMPLE STATEMENT SUGGESTED IN PARA TWO OF REFTEL. FIRST UNDER-SCORING DAOUD'S WORDS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF SEEKING SOLUTIONS BY PEACEFUL MEANS, I THEN TALKED "INFORMALLY AND UNOFFICIALLY" ABOUT WHAT I PERCEIVED TO BE DIFFERENT PERCEPTIONS OF DANGER FROM KABUL, TEHRAN AND ISLAMABAD. ALLUDING DELICATELY TO SOME EVENTS SINCE THE REVOLUTION WHICH SEEMED TO HAVE FED IRANIAN AND PAKISTANI APPREHENSIONS ABOUT THE EXTENT OF SOVIET INFLUENCE HERE AS WELL AS ABOUT AFGHANISTAN'S ULTIMATE INTENTIONS TOWARD "PUSHTUNISTAN", I SUGGESTED THAT ALL THREE COUNTRIES MIGHT OVER-REACT TO EXAGGERATED FEARS OF THEIR NEIGHBORS. THE ONLY WAY TO DISPEL SUCH POSSIBLE "PARANOIA" WOULD BE MORE DIRECT COMMUNICATION AMONG THE THREE GOVERNMENTS. IN THE COURSE OF MY COMMENTS I MADE SOME GUARDED ALLUSIONS TO QUESTIONS RAISED ABROAD ABOUT THE NUMBER OF "LEFTISTS" APPOINTED BY THE NEW REGIME, MAKING CLEAR THAT THESE WERE QUESTIONS RAISED IN NEIGHBORING CAPITALS, NOT RPT NOT SECRET

PAGE 02 KABUL 07332 02 OF 02 160923Z

NECESSARILY BY THE US.

7. DAOUD FIRST SMILED BENIGNLY AND AGREED IT WAS PROBABLY TRUE THAT ALL THREE COUNTRIES WERE TO SOME EXTENT UNREALISTICALLY AFRAID OF EACH OTHER. HE STRESSED HOWEVER THAT IN THE THREE MONTHS SINCE THE REVOLUTION, AFGHANISTAN HAD MADE NO HOSTILE MOVES TOWARD ANY NEIGHBOR, ALTHOUGH HE COULD NOT SPEAK FOR AFGHAN BEHAVIOR BEFORE JULY 17. ON THE OTHER HAND, HOSTILE PAKISTANI ATTITUDES HAD PRECEDED THE REVOLUTION AND HAD GREATLY INCREASED IN THE POST-REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD. HE ADMITTED THAT HIS NEIGHBORS SAW A THREAT IN AFGHANISTAN'S CLOSE RELATIONSHIP TO THE SOVIET UNION, BUT POINTED OUT THAT THE GREAT ARMS BUILDUP IN IRAN AND PAKISTAN BEGAN MANY MONTHS AGO.

8. AT THIS POINT DAOUD LEANED FORWARD, DROPPED HIS GRANDFATHERLY MASK FOR A FEW MOMENTS, AND SAID WITH THE UTMOST COLDNESS "I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THERE IS NOT ONE COMMUNIST IN THIS GOVERNMENT AND THERE WILL NOT BE SO LONG AS I AM IN THIS POSITION. THEY ARE ALL GOOD AFGHANS AND GOOD MUSLIMS." HE THEN WENT ON AT SOME LENGTH TO DERIDE BITTERLY THE "MCCARTHYISM" (HIS PHRASE) WHICH HAD IN RECENT YEARS FORCED MANY LOYAL, PATRIOTIC NATIONALISTS TO BE LABELED AS COMMUNISTS ONLY BECAUSE THEY OPPOSED "THAT INDESCRIBABLY CORRUPT REGIME." HE SAID THAT IT WOULD BE NAIVE TO THINK THAT AN AFGHAN WHO HAS STUDIED IN THE US IS AUTOMATICALLY PRO-AMERICAN, OR THAT AN AFGHAN WHO STUDIED IN THE SOVIET UNION IS AUTOMATICALLY A COMMUNIST. HOWEVER, HE EMPASIZED, THE MORE THIS EQUATION WAS MADE AND THE MORE OPPONENTS OF THE MONARCHICAL REGIME WERE LABELED AS COMMUNISTS, THE MORE THEY HAD FELT INCLINED TO MOVE IN THAT DIRECTION. HE TALKED BITTERLY ABOUT THE USE MADE BY THE PREVIOUS REGIME OF MULLAHS AND "FEUDAL LEADERS" TO BLACKEN THE REPUTATION OF TRUE AFGHAN PATRIOTS, EVENTUALLY CLOSING OFF ALL

AVENUES TO THEM EXCEPT THE ROAD TOWARD CLOSER TIES TO THE SOVIET UNION. MEANINGFULLY, HE SAID "THIS IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF WHAT CAN ALSO HAPPEN WITH NATIONS; IF YOU CONSIDER US OR CALL US PRO-SOVIET OR COMMUNIST, WE WILL INEVITABLY BE PUSHED TO MOVE IN THAT DIRECTION. HE SUMMED UP HIS REMARKS BY REASSERTING VEHEMENTLY HIS AFGHAN PATRIOTISM AND THAT OF HIS ENTIRE GOVERNMENT.

9. I HASTENED TO REITERATE THAT THE ALLUSIONS I HAD MADE EARLIER WERE TO VIEWS OF AFGHANISTAN WHICH WE HEARD EXPRESSED IN NEIGHBORING CAPITALS, NOT THE VIEWS OF MY GOVERNMENT. I STRESSED THAT FROM
SECRET

PAGE 03 KABUL 07332 02 OF 02 160923Z

OUR EARLIER YEARS OF DEALING WITH THE PRESIDENT WE WERE DEEPLY CONVINCED OF HIS PATRIOTISM AND JEALOUS DEVOTION TO AFGHAN INDEPENDENCE. AND, I CONCLUDED THAT WE, OF COURSE, WOULD BE GUIDED IN OUR ASSESSMENTS OF AFGHAN DEVELOPMENTS BY CONCRETE ACTIONS RATHER THAN BY LABELS.

10. THE CONVERSATION CONCLUDED WITH BRIEF DISCUSSIONS OF A FEW BILATERAL MATTERS (SEPTELS). THERE WAS NO RPT NO MENTION OF THE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT, AN INDICATION OF HOW PREOCCUPIED DAOUD SEEMED TO BE WITH HIS OBSESSION OVER PUSHTUNISTAN. MY EFFORT TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE RESULTS OF NAIM'S VISITS TO THE USSR AND INDIA MET WITH A FRIENDLY SMILE, NO RESPONSE, AND A CLEAR INDICATION THAT THE MEETING HAD ENDED. AS WE WERE BIDDING ONE ANOTHER GOODBYE IN VERY WARM FASHION, PRESIDENT DAOUD ASSURED ME THAT HE DID INDEED VALUE FRANK SPEAKING AND WAS HAPPY TO HAVE HAD THIS EXCHANGE. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING "THAT HE WANTED TO BE PERFECTLY FRANK WITH ME ALSO." IN ORDER NOT TO HAVE ME THINK ANY SURPRISES WERE BEING PREPARED FOR US, HE WANTED ME TO KNOW IN ADVANCE OF THE ARRIVAL ON OCTOBER 15 OF A LARGE SOVIET MILITARY MISSION TO "DIRECT THE REORGANIZATION OF THE AFGHAN ARMED FORCES." I THANKED HIM FOR THIS WORD AND TOOK MY LEAVE.

11. IN CONTEXT OF THE EARLIER DISCUSSION, THIS NOTICE OF THE ARRIVAL OF THE SOVIET MILITARY GROUP IMPLIED CLEARLY THAT AFGHANISTAN WILL BE RECEIVING LARGE ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS OF UNDOUBTEDLY EXPENSIVE SOVIET EQUIPMENT OVER THE MONTHS TO COME. (THIS IMPLICATION EXPLICITLY CONFIRMED BY ABDULLAH AT SUBSEQUENT MEETING.) THERE WAS ALSO MORE THAN A HINT OF CONFIRMATION THAT NEITHER THE RUSSIANS NOR THE INDIANS HAVE GIVEN ANY BLANK CHECKS IN SUPPORT FOR DAOUD'S PUSHTUNISTAN ADVENTURISM, AND THAT HE HAS CONCLUDED HE MUST BUILD UP HIS OWN ARMY TO THE POINT WHERE IT WOULD BE A MORE CREDITABLE THREAT TO PAKISTAN, WITH OR WITHOUT DIRECT SOVIET SUPPORT.

12. I CAME AWAY FROM THIS MEETING WITH SEVERAL CONCLUSIONS:
(A) DAOUD'S OBSESSION ABOUT PUSHTUNISTAN HAS CERTAINLY NOT BEEN DIMMED BY THE PASSING YEARS, (B) WHILE HOPING TO MAINTAIN US FRIENDSHIP AND ASSISTANCE FOR HIS REGIME, HE COUNTS LITTLE ON OUR INFLUENCE IN CONNECTION WITH HIS GOALS WITH RESPECT TO PAKISTAN, (C) HE IS OPERATING IN CONSIDERABLE ISOLATION AND MAY BE QUITE NAIVE

AND ILL-INFORMED ABOUT TRENDS IN HIS GOVERNMENT, AND (D) HE

SECRET

PAGE 04 KABUL 07332 02 OF 02 160923Z

REMAINS CONFIDENT OF HIS ABILITY TO USE THE RUSSIANS AND THEIR
SUPPORT WITHOUT LOSING HIS OWN FREEDOM OF ACTION. THESE IMPRESSIONS
COME PARTLY FROM ATMOSPHERICS OF THE MEETING AND PARTLY FROM HIS
WORDS. BUT I CANNOT HELP BUT FEEL PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE OVERALL
TREND OF EVENTS HERE IF THEY ARE EVEN PARTLY CORRECT.
LEWIS

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 11 MAY 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, MILITARY ASSISTANCE, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, BORDER INCIDENTS, BOUNDARY CLAIMS, PUSHTUNISTAN
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: garlanwa
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973KABUL07332
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: KABUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731065/abqcefoo.tel
Line Count: 284
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: STATE 202064 (NOTAL)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: garlanwa
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUL 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25-Jul-2001 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <05-Dec-2001 by garlanwa>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT DAOUD
TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, PINT, AF, PK, IR, UR, (DAOUD, PRESIDENT)
To: STATE INFO ISLAMABAD
LONDON
MOSCOW
NEW DELHI
TEHRAN
CINCPAC

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005